

Horsetail BD #508 (*Equisetum arvense*) Frequently Asked Questions

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What's the difference between 501 and 508? When do you use 508? When is it better to use fermented 508?

All of the biodynamic preparations have an association with a cosmic influence. In the case of BD #501, there is an association with our sun and its warmth, light and the influence felt in our atmosphere. In the case of BD #508, horsetail preparation, there is an association with mitigating the watery influence of the moon and an association with comets. Additionally, *Equisetum arvense* (horsetail) has a very high silica content.

The two preparations influence plants in a very different way. BD #501 influences plants in their utilization of light to photosynthesize, build structure, initiate and maintain the complex carbohydrates responsible for increased storing and keeping quality in food plants. It fosters more complex nutritive capacities for the nutrition of our grazing animals and, ultimately, food for humans that is more aligned with life forces. BD #508 has a different association with silica as a spray preparation. Plant association with the lunar forces upon earth can result in a watery influence, similar to the rhythmic effects felt by the phases of the moon and effects upon tides, female menstruation and birth. If those watery influences are accentuated in plants, there may be an environment conducive to disease states of fungal origin, insect attraction, etc. Spraying BD #508 balances those watery influences by introducing a drying, balancing effect of the silica-rich horsetail plant. The plant form of silica induces a similar stimulus toward structure, organization, and “uprightness” as opposed to fleshy, watery proliferate growth.

Use of BD #508 as a spray preparation should be part of a holistic approach using all nine biodynamic preparations. Although some practitioners feel more inclined to use BD #508 as a medicament for disease states, its full effectiveness is realized as both an atmospheric and foliar spray and as a ground drench to effect balance in the same way as the other spray preparations. In the sequential spraying technique, BD #508 punctuates a balance toward a drying effect. In a foliar spray application in the greenhouse, BD #508 balances the moist environment and can prevent aphid, white fly, fungus gnats and damping off. The fermented version as a soil drench can balance beneficial fungal and bacterial organisms in the soil by increasing their populations. BD #508 may be added to tree paste recipes, compost piles, when making Barrel Compost Compound preparation, and in compost tea brews. Advantages to the fermented version of BD #508 are a more concentrated preparation,

so less is used in stirring, increased populations of beneficial organisms, and a stable preparation for longer storage. Varying dilutions of the fermented version have been used with success and the conditions of your geographic area may determine whether a stronger or weaker dilution is preferred. See below for directions for the fermented version.

Fermented Version BD #508 Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

To Make: The following is a slightly modified recipe of the one developed by L. Kolisko. Put one unit (8 oz. by volume or 1.5 oz. by weight) of dry horsetail herb in one gallon of spring or rain water, bring to a boil and simmer on low for one hour making a decoction. Let cool and transfer to a crock or large glass jar with a loose fitting lid. Store in a cool, dark place, such as a basement, and allow it to ferment for ten to fourteen days, until the characteristic sulfur smell described by Kolisko develops. Once it has fermented, strain the herb particles out and put the tea in a glass jar and store in a cool dark place until ready to use. It can be stored six months or more without losing effectiveness.

To Use: Add ½ gallon of the fermented tea to 4½ gallons of clean water, stir for twenty minutes in the usual biodynamic way of creating alternating deep vortices. This amount will treat 1½ acres. The ratio for diluting is one part fermented tea to nine parts water. The fermented BD #508 most likely should be applied as a soil spray (or in the atmosphere), whereas as the fresh tea version may be better suited for foliar application.

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